

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 001420

SIPDIS

AF/S FOR B. NEULING  
SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR C. COURVILLE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/18/2015

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [ZI](#) [MDC](#) [ZANU](#) [PF](#)

SUBJECT: MOYO WEAVES TALE OF PARTIES IN DISARRAY

REF: HARARE 001405

Classified By: Ambassador Christopher Dell for reasons 1.5 b/d

-----  
Summary  
-----

1. (C) In an October 13 meeting with the Charge, Independent MP and former Minister of Information Jonathan Moyo said that both the opposition MDC and ruling ZANU-PF were significantly weakened since the March parliamentary elections. The MDC, he said, had been focused inward since the elections and had missed an opportunity to mobilize the public over Operation Restore Order. Moyo added that the MDC's current division over whether to contest the Senate elections could be disastrous for the party. Meanwhile, he said ZANU-PF was terminally rotten and increasingly controlled by the security forces, which remained loyal to Mugabe. Moyo said he agreed that a political transition was underway. He predicted that the ruling party would attempt to put off the presidential elections until 2010 to give more time for Mugabe's successor to settle into the job. They would use as an excuse harmonizing the parliamentary and presidential elections. Moyo was coy regarding the prospects for the so-called Third Force that he is associated with, conceding only that his nascent party was aggressively seeking defectors from the two established parties and that it would not contest the Senate elections. End Summary.

-----  
MDC Licking Wounds  
-----

2. (C) Moyo described the MDC as preoccupied with internal upheaval and said its actions since the March parliamentary elections had been ineffective. Saying that the MDC had little future and no hope of making a recovery, Moyo assessed that the main opposition party had missed an opportunity to capitalize on public discontent over Operation Restore Order. The public was ready to confront ZANU-PF but they needed guidance, which had not been forthcoming from the MDC. Moyo said the MDC leadership was courageous but overall lacked a clear policy vision or strategy to confront the regime.

3. (C) Moyo pointed to the rift within the MDC surrounding participation in the upcoming Senate elections as evidence the party was in disarray (ref). Moyo said that Tsvangirai's opposition to participation was popular among

SIPDIS  
the party's grass roots supporters, especially the youth and women's wings. Nonetheless, the other five of the MDC's top six leaders favored contesting the elections as had a majority of the party's Executive Council. Moyo claimed the party elite's support for participation had more to do with self-interest and the desire for the perquisites of the Senate than ideological or strategic justifications.

4. (C) Moyo conceded that the MDC was still strong in the urban areas and in Matabeleland, its traditional strongholds, and that those who favored participation were right that the party should win the Senate seats in these areas regardless of ZANU-PF election rigging. That said, it would be disastrous for the party to compete in the elections in its current state of disarray. Moyo predicted that a portion of the party would participate regardless but without Tsvangirai's active involvement, MDC turnout would be poor

SIPDIS  
and the party would have the worst possible outcome: they would legitimize the Senate while losing badly at the polls.

-----  
ZANU Struggling with Transition, Growing Unpopularity  
-----

5. (C) Moyo said he agreed with the view that the transition was already underway within ZANU-PF. He said there were two competing views within ZANU-PF about how to handle the transition. The first was that President Mugabe would give way to the new leader at some point in the next few years and give that individual time to settle into the presidency.

Moyo predicted that under this scenario, ZANU-PF would use its two-thirds majority in parliament to extend the current presidential mandate until 2010, using as an excuse the need to harmonize the presidential and parliamentary elections, currently scheduled for 2008 and 2010 respectively. This delay would allow Mugabe to step down sometime in the next few years, likely 2008. The constitution would also be amended to allow his successor to then step into the presidency without an election and finish Mugabe's term and then run in 2010 as the incumbent.

16. (C) However, Moyo said the other view was gaining currency, especially with the security forces, and he suspected might carry the day. This view believed that the founding leaders must not be removed but instead allowed to die in office. A transition while they were still alive would weaken the party and would be humiliating for the leaders, who would die outside of office. Moyo said that however the transition played out, it would not lead to fundamental reform or to an economic turnaround. There were no real moderates left within the ruling party. The so-called young Turks only wanted the perquisites of power for themselves. Moyo further rejected the argument that Mugabe was the main impediment to reform, saying that it was a convenient excuse and that Mugabe is not a machine.<sup>8</sup> The real problem was the party itself.

17. (C) Moyo added that ZANU-PF knew it was deeply unpopular. ZANU wanted to be loved, not feared, but growing unpopularity had forced the regime to rely increasingly on the security forces. He contended that the party originally launched the land reform policy to win the public's hearts and minds, but that the government ) a separate entity from the party in Moyo's eyes - had mismanaged the initiative and fueled discontent. According to Moyo, ZANU-PF has responded to growing discontent in &sinister ways<sup>8</sup> such as the security forces, manipulation of the state-owned Grain Marketing Board and the distribution of food.

-----  
Moyo Tight-Lipped on Political Aspirations  
-----

18. (C) Moyo refused to be drawn into a discussion of his or the third forces, political future, conceding only that he was vigorously seeking defections from the other established parties. Arguing that participation in the Senate elections would only legitimize a corrupt institution and temporary institution (its due to go out of existence in five year,s time), he said his party would not participate in the November poll. Nonetheless, he planned to exploit the campaign season to advance his party,s agenda.

-----  
Comment  
-----

19. (C) Moyo presented a cerebral and articulate analysis of the state of the two major political parties in Zimbabwe. In fact, he may be the most astute politician in Zimbabwe today. He is also a rank opportunist. Although he refused to be drawn into discussions of &next steps<sup>8</sup> for his nascent political force, it is clear that the chameleon-like Moyo is positioning himself as an alternative to the two main parties that he believes are increasingly fragile.  
DELL